

**In the Claims:**

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

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1 - 7. (Cancelled)

C ) 8. (Currently Amended) A workpiece processing method comprising:  
positioning an electrode against a workpiece surface, said electrode having an  
electrode tip having a sheath, said sheath having a sheath tip rim;  
engaging said workpiece surface with said sheath tip rim to thereby cause the  
sheath tip rim to splay outwardly upon said contacting to form a  
continuous seal about the periphery of said electrode tip; and  
with said electrode tip electrically engaging said workpiece, imparting a desired  
electrical bias to said workpiece; and  
~~exposing said electrically biased workpiece to desired processing conditions.~~

9. (Previously Added) The workpiece processing method of claim 8 further  
comprising supporting said workpiece in a position adjacent said sheathed electrode.

10. (Previously Added) The workpiece processing method of claim 8 wherein  
said positioning step comprises:

moving said electrode along a first motion axis away from a disengaged position;  
and  
moving said electrode along a second motion axis that is different from said first  
motion axis toward an engaged position.

11. (Previously Added) The workpiece processing method of claim 8 wherein said positioning step comprises:

longitudinally moving said electrode along a longitudinal movement axis away from a disengaged position in which said workpiece surface is not engaged by said electrode tip; and  
rotating said electrode about said longitudinal movement axis toward an engaged position in which said electrode tip is placed in electrical contact with said workpiece surface.

12. (Previously Added) The workpiece processing method of claim 8 wherein said positioning step comprises:

moving said electrode along a first motion axis away from a disengaged position;  
moving said electrode along a second motion axis toward an engaged position,  
said second motion axis being different from said first motion axis;  
said engaging step comprising advancing said electrode tip from a retracted position within the sheath to an unretracted position in which said workpiece surface is physically engaged by the electrode tip.

13. (Previously Added) The workpiece processing method of claim 8 wherein said positioning step comprises:

longitudinally moving said sheathed electrode along a longitudinal movement axis away from a disengaged position in which said workpiece surface is not engaged by said electrode tip;  
rotating said electrode about said longitudinal movement axis and toward an engaged position in which said electrode tip may engage said workpiece surface; and  
said engaging step comprising advancing said electrode tip from a retracted position within the sheath to an unretracted position in which said workpiece surface is physically engaged by the electrode tip.

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14. (Previously Added) A process for electroplating a metal onto the surface of a workpiece comprising:

placing the workpiece upon a processing head including an electrode contact assembly, the electrode contact assembly comprising at least one electrode contact having a contact tip and at least one sealing member disposed proximate the contact tip of the at least one electrode contact, the at least one sealing member including a resilient rim;

driving the electrode contact assembly into engagement with the workpiece to place the at least one electrode contact into electrical engagement with the workpiece, the at least one sealing rim splaying away from the contact tip of the at least one electrode contact to thereby form a continuous seal against a surface of the workpiece;

placing the workpiece into contact with an electrolyte;

providing electrical power to the at least one contact and an anode disposed in electrical contact with the electrolyte to thereby electroplate the metal on the workpiece.

15. (Currently Amended) A process for electroplating a metal onto the surface of a workpiece comprising:

placing the workpiece upon a processing head including an electrode contact assembly, the electrode contact assembly comprising a plurality of electrode contacts each having a contact tip and a plurality of sealing members respectively associated with an proximate each of the contact tips, each of the plurality of sealing members including a respective resilient rim;

driving the electrode contact assembly into engagement with the workpiece to place the plurality of electrode contacts into electrical engagement with the workpiece, the sealing rims splaying radially outward from each respective contact tip to thereby form a continuous seal against a surface of the workpiece around the respective contact tip;

placing the workpiece into contact with an electrolyte;  
providing electrical power to the ~~at least one contact~~ plurality of electrode contacts and an anode disposed in electrical contact with the electrolyte to thereby electroplate the metal on the workpiece.

16. (New) The workpiece processing method of claim 8 further comprising electrochemically processing the workpiece.

17. (New) The workpiece processing method of claim 8 further comprising exposing the electrically biased workpiece to an electrolyte, the continuous seal separating a contact of the electrode from the electrolyte.

18. (New) An apparatus for processing workpieces, comprising:  
a device support having a first alignment surface;  
a processing vessel carried by the device support at a carrying plane, the processing vessel being configured to receive at least one processing liquid;  
a workpiece support positioned to carry the workpiece at least proximate to the processing vessel;  
a drive unit operatively coupled to the workpiece support to move the workpiece support relative to the processing vessel; and  
a mounting portion coupled to the workpiece support and having a second alignment surface removably mated with the first alignment surface, with the workpiece support being supported relative to the device support only at or above the carrying plane.

19. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the mounting portion includes a base.

20. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the drive unit is operatively coupled to the workpiece support to rotate the workpiece support about a rotation axis.

21. (New) The tool of claim 18 wherein the processing vessel is configured to receive an electrochemical processing liquid.

22. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the processing vessel extends below the carrying plane.

23. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the workpiece support is configured to carry the workpiece in contact with a processing liquid.

24. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the workpiece support includes at least one contact assembly having at least one electrical contact positioned to make contact with the workpiece.

25. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the workpiece support includes at least one electrode and at least one sheath positioned to seal against a surface of the workpiece.

26. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the carrying plane includes an aperture in which the processing vessel is received.

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